



Operational Guidance for K-12 Schools to Support Safe In-Person Learning

As we enter the 2022-23 school year, Missouri's Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) and Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) advise local education agencies (LEAs) and local public health agencies (LPHAs) to refer to the current COVID-19 guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [CDC's operational guidance](#), updated on August 11, 2022, shares best practice recommendations to prevent and mitigate COVID-19, and DESE and DHSS encourage LEAs and LPHAs to adopt the measures that work best in protecting the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

This guidance can help school leaders support safe, in-person learning while managing the spread of COVID-19. Based on the COVID-19 Community Levels, this guidance provides flexibility so LEAs can adapt to changing local situations, including periods of increased community health impacts from COVID-19.

COVID-19 Community Levels

CDC's [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) help communities and individuals make decisions on what COVID-19 prevention strategies to use based on whether their community is classified as low, medium, or high. These levels factor in a combination of COVID-19 hospitalization rates, healthcare burden, and COVID-19 cases. Data is updated weekly.

Antigen Testing Resources

Missouri's [COVID-19 Antigen Testing program](#) is available to all Missouri LEAs and private schools. The purpose of the Antigen tests is to help schools safely deliver in-person learning to as many students as possible. Antigen tests can be used for symptomatic testing, asymptomatic testing, and testing individuals from positive pools identified in the screening testing program.

An application is required, but testing kits are provided to schools at no charge. Contact AntigenTesting@health.mo.gov with questions.